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ABSTRACT

This guide provides a framework for individuals and organizations to develop or strengthen local interagency linkage teams. The guide is revised from an earlier publication stemming from a project that facilitated the formation of local interagency linkage teams throughout Ohio. These teams focus on improving services to at-risk youth and adults through the development of collaborative interagency linkages. The guide proposes a series of steps, poses a number of questions, and provides planning forms and information about additional resources to assist interested persons in implementing the process of collaborative interagency linkage development to provide better services to at-risk clients. The process outlined in the guide is designed to help overcome many of the deterrents to interagency collaboration, such as shortage of time, lack of information, competition for scarce resources, distinct organizational structures, different geographical boundaries, and dissimilar calendars. The process includes a series of six steps, each forming a section of the guide: (1) assessing the local need and climate for interagency partnerships; (2) getting started; (3) forming the team; (4) establishing a collaborative relationship; (5) developing a plan; and (6) follow up and follow through. The guide includes three appendixes: an action plan form, a list of 19 agency resources and an annotated bibliography of 23 printed resources, and a synopsis of linkage projects in Ohio. (KC)

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A Guide for Developing Local Interagency Linkage Teams

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CENTER ON EDUCATION
AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Susan Imel

FOR THE COMMON GOOD

A GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING LOCAL INTERAGENCY LINKAGE TEAMS

Revised Edition

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FOREWORD

Begun in 1990 as a project to encourage and facilitate local linkages of programs and services serving at-risk families in Ohio, "For the Common Good: Building Linkages for At-Risk Youth and Adults in Ohio," is an example of a project whose time has come. Since its inception, 41 local linkage teams have been formed under the project's auspices. Initiated as a result of the Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA), which requires states to make education services available to participants in the FSA Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Training Program, the project operates under the direction of a team comprised of state-level staff from the following agencies: Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Human Services, Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Ohio Department of Development, Ohio Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, and Ohio Board of Regents.

Established as a means of addressing a specific legislative initiative, "For the Common Good" has also responded to the national trend of collaborative linkages as a strategy for implementing systemic change. During the past 30 years, social, demographic, and economic changes have reshaped families, communities, and schools. These transformations mean that families, communities, and schools must create new ways of supporting and nurturing education and lifelong learning. A positive result of the changes in society has been the recognition and acknowledgement of the interrelationships among the home, schools, and community as well as among public and private enterprises. However, the current system of delivering services has been structured within discrete categorical boundaries, usually related to professional disciplines and bureaucratic needs. This costly fragmentation within the service delivery system has created a call for collaboration among agencies and within communities to reach goals that cannot be achieved by operating in isolation.

Like many other "good ideas," successful local interagency collaboration is not easily achieved. It takes time and energy and requires leadership and commitment on the part of the agencies involved. In terms of current and future funding sources, the handwriting is clearly on the wall. Funders expect collaborative efforts not only because such coalitions stretch resources, but also because they produce better results. The local interagency teams formed through the Common Good project are making remarkable progress in developing integrated services with a client-centered focus. Clearly, they are well positioned in the current environment that calls for interagency collaboration to provide client-centered, integrated service delivery.

Originally published in 1992, this guide was produced to assist local communities in developing effective collaborative interagency linkage teams. Its development grew out of the early experiences of the project, "For the Common Good: Building Linkages for At-Risk Youth and Adults in Ohio." Because the process described in the guide has proven to be so successful, the publication has been revised to update the sections on resources for further information and the project's progress in Ohio.

Susan Imel, Project Director, revised the publication. Sandra Kerka, Program Associate, edited the manuscript, and Janet Ray served as word processor operator.

Prior to publication, the guide revision was reviewed by Jeffrey Gove, ABLE/JOBS Supervisor, Ohio Department of Education and facilitator of the Common Good State Linkage Team.

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USING THE GUIDE

This guide provides a framework for individuals and organizations desiring to develop or strengthen local interagency linkage teams. Its development emerges from the experiences of the For the Common Good State Linkage Team in facilitating the formation of local interagency linkage teams throughout Ohio. These local teams focus on improving services to at-risk youth and adults through the development of collaborative interagency linkages. The guide proposes a series of steps, poses a number of questions, and provides planning forms and information about additional resources to assist interested persons in implementing the process of collaborative interagency linkage development to provide better services for at-risk clients.

The process outlined in this guide can help overcome many of the deterrents to interagency collaboration—

- Shortage of time .
- Lack of information
- Competition for scarce resources
- Distinct organizational structures
- Different geographical boundaries
- Dissimilar calendars, i.e., the school year versus the calendar year

If you want to become involved in developing or strengthening local interagency linkages, this guide will assist you. Its purpose is to assist in planning for, implementing, and sustaining interagency linkage teams through a series of steps:

- Assessing the local need and climate for interagency partnerships
- Getting started
- Forming the team
- Establishing a collaborative relationship
- Developing a plan
- Follow up and follow through

Although the guide can be used by an agency or an individual desiring to take a leadership role in developing a local interagency team, a collaborative planning effort from the beginning would help ensure co-ownership of the linkage team. A series of questions to guide you through the planning process accompanies each step.

Instant collaboration may bring instant gratification, but it is not likely to bring success. Instead, careful planning, combined with thoughtful involvement of people and places, is essential for the kind of . . . collaboration that leads to improved well-being for all [individuals at-risk].

Guthrie and Guthrie 1991

As with most planning activities, it may not be feasible or desirable to follow the steps in a linear fashion. However, each step contains information that must be considered in the process of interagency linkage development. Appendices contain materials that can be copied and used as aids in the process. Appendix A contains an action plan form for use in developing a plan. Appendix B lists resources for further information. A third appendix describes what is happening in Ohio with the formation and implementation of local interagency linkage teams.

THE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT — A CATALYST FOR DEVELOPING LINKAGES

The Family Support Act (FSA) of 1988 encourages educators, human services and employment and training personnel, and other professionals to collaborate in strengthening families and helping them move toward self-sufficiency. The FSA clearly recognizes education as a central element in helping families avoid long-term dependence on public assistance and requires states to make educational services available to participants under its Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Training Program.

Educators and employment and training personnel have an opportunity to be involved with human services staff in providing education and training programs to JOB clients. Implementation of the FSA requires a commitment on the part of educators and employment and training personnel to provide access to regular and alternative schools for welfare recipients under age 21 who often do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Educators must also be committed to providing appropriate programs and services so that these students graduate from high school or earn their equivalency certificate.

Although the current system of delivering programs and services to individuals and families has been structured within distinctive categorical boundaries that are usually related to professional disciplines and bureaucratic needs (Bruner 1991), the FSA affords professionals opportunities to forge critical interagency connections and expand the range and capacity of programs for learners at risk. If educators, human service and employment and training personnel, and other professionals are to take advantage of these opportunities, they must begin forming linkages with each other in their local areas.

STEP ONE
ASSESSING THE LOCAL NEED AND CLIMATE FOR INTERAGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

Sometimes interagency linkages emerge spontaneously as a result of local conditions, but usually someone needs to take the lead in developing them. The first step involves assessing the need and climate for interagency partnerships in your local area.

Some problems are best solved by a single agency. However, many problems or needs cannot be accomplished by an agency acting alone—or cannot be accomplished as effectively (Bruner 1991). In such instances, a favorable environment exists for the development of interagency linkages.

Without a perceived need, interagency partnerships are unlikely to materialize. A problem may not be clearly recognized, or potential partners may be distracted by other concerns or may have preexisting negative relationships (Melaville and Blank 1991).

When the following factors converge, the time is ideal for collaborative efforts:

- Human needs
- Public sentiment
- Legislative priorities
- Institutional readiness

"The most supportive climate is one in which a problem with multiple causes and consequences . . . is a top priority of the community, key decision makers, and service providers, and where previously established working relationships exist among potential partners" (ibid., p. 20).

The existence of a less than optimal environment does not mean that work toward forming interagency linkages cannot go forward. You may use the time to begin (or improve) communication with potential partners. You may also use the period to work with other agencies on achieving internal objectives, waiting for a more opportune time to tackle broad-based, joint problems (ibid.).

Questions to Consider in Step One: Assessing the Local Need and Climate for Interagency Partnerships

1. Do we serve clients whose needs overlap the current delivery systems in education, human services, employment, and health?
2. How are we doing on our own serving these clients?
3. What is the nature of our relationships with other agencies serving the same clients?
4. How might closer relationships with other agencies help improve outcomes for our clients?
5. What problems or issues could be addressed more effectively through interagency linkages?
6. In our community, what is the history of interagency collaboration and cooperation and what can be learned from it?
7. What barriers to collaboration exist?

STEP TWO
GETTING STARTED

If you decide that the local environment will support the development of interagency partnerships, a number of activities will be needed to initiate an interagency team: formulating a tentative rationale, identifying existing linkages, and developing internal administrative support.

Formulating a Tentative Rationale

Formation of a tentative rationale requires that you answer the question, "Why is there a need for a local linkage team?" This information will be needed to help ensure internal support as well as to market the team idea in the community. Your assessment of the local situation in Step One can form the basis for the answer to this question. You will need to be able to—

- state the key problems and issues;
- articulate why they are better addressed by multiple agencies; and
- identify who the key players might be.

Identifying Existing Linkages

Frequently, existing linkages can form the basis for a team. In fact, developing a team may simply be a matter of formalizing already existing linkages by creating a structure to approach problem solutions in a more systematic way. Thinking about individuals in other agencies with whom you maintain regular contact is a good way to begin this process. Those persons can also be asked about their networks. Talking to others in your organization about their contacts and knowledge of existing linkages may also be helpful in this process.

Developing Internal Administrative Support

You may need to generate internal administrative support for an interagency linkage team. Your tentative rationale should clearly enumerate the organizational benefits of interagency linkages. For example, what could an interagency team accomplish that could not be realized by your organization on its own and how would these achievements contribute to the organization's mission or goals? Ensuring internal support should be a continuous process that includes keeping administrators informed of progress and reporting on successes that have a positive effect on the organization.

Questions to Consider in Step Two: Getting Started

1. Why is there a need for a local linkage team? (Use information gathered in Step One to respond to this question.)
2. What current contacts do we have with other agencies serving the same clients? (List agencies and name(s) of contact person.)
3. What could an interagency linkage team accomplish that our organization could not achieve on its own?
4. How would these achievements contribute to our organization's mission and goals?
5. What is the most effective way of approaching the leadership in our organization with this information?

STEP THREE
FORMING THE TEAM

Your work in formulating a tentative rationale and identifying existing linkages will provide the foundation for the step of forming the team. Activities in this step include identifying and selecting key players and issuing the invitations.

Identifying and Selecting the Key Players

A key part of this activity is identifying which organizations should be represented on the team. This process was begun earlier when you listed existing linkages. Now you need to identify which agencies will have a stake in solving the problems or issues described in the tentative rationale. These are the groups most likely to have an interest in working toward joint solutions, especially if they are groups with which you or your organization have established working relationships. However, don't exclude a group on the basis of no previous contact or lack of information about its interests. Be prepared to do some homework on such organizations to determine if they should be a part of the team.

An important consideration is who should actually represent the organization on the team. Experience has demonstrated that team members should either be or have access to decision makers within their agencies. It is important to have line staff involvement and leadership on the team. To a great extent, individual members' power and position will determine whether the team will have the necessary authority to modify how things are done or negotiate policy changes (Melaville and Blank 1991). Prospective team members should also be knowledgeable about their organizations, especially in relation to the problems or issues the team will address.

Issuing the Invitation

There are a number of ways to issue an invitation to become a part of a newly forming interagency linkage team. Your organization's internal procedures as well as local custom may dictate how this will occur. Ideally, whoever is taking the initiative to organize the linkage team should issue the invitations.

You will have to decide if it is better to begin with an oral invitation or with a written letter. If you decide that beginning with an oral invitation is best, you should plan to follow it with a written letter that includes the rationale for forming the team as well as some estimate of the time team membership will take. Stressing the benefits to the organization of being involved in this type of activity can help offset fears agencies may have about extending already stretched resources.

It is also probably best to issue the invitation to join the team to the head of the organization. Again, local circumstances may dictate how this happens. Beginning with the agency head will help ensure internal support for the team and its activities. It may also secure the type of representative needed, i.e., an individual involved in or with access to decision making.

Questions to Consider in Step Three: Forming the Team

1. Which organizations also work with the clients that our organization serves?
2. What other groups might have a stake in solving problems that affect these clients?
3. How can existing linkages be used in forming the team?
4. What qualifications should team representatives have?
5. How should the invitation to be part of the team be issued?
6. What information should a written invitation contain?
7. Who will be responsible for developing and issuing the invitations?

STEP FOUR
ESTABLISHING A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP

Although described as a separate step, establishing (and maintaining) a collaborative relationship is an ongoing process. It begins in the early stages of team development and continues throughout the life of the team. Collaboration implies a willingness on the part of organizations to change the way services are delivered by—

- jointly developing and agreeing to a set of common goals and directions;
- sharing responsibility for obtaining those goals; and
- working together to achieve those goals, using the expertise of each collaborator (Bruner 1991, p. 6).

Initially, partners may not be ready for a collaborative relationship. Instead, they may work together cooperatively to help each other meet their respective organizational goals without making any tangible changes in the way they deliver services or in their operating procedures. However, unless these cooperative relationships become increasingly collaborative in nature, no changes will occur in the service delivery system (Melaville and Blank 1991).

Factors Contributing to Collaboration

A number of factors contribute to collaborative linkages:

- Regular contact through purposeful meetings
- Frequent communication through telephone calls and mail
- A focus that is client centered (rather than organizational)
- Leadership that helps develop and maintain a shared vision
- A plan that delineates shared goals and objectives (Because the plan is the key factor in establishing a collaborative relationship, the next step is devoted to it.)
- Appropriate agency representation on the team to execute the plan

By attending to these factors, you can help ensure that the work of the team is more collaborative than cooperative in nature.

Questions to Consider in Step Four: Establishing a Collaborative Relationship

1. Will the existing relationships among the agencies represented on the team support a collaborative—rather than cooperative—effort?
2. What can be done to ensure that the linkage team will be collaborative rather than merely cooperative?

STEP FIVE
DEVELOPING A PLAN

A plan that establishes joint goals and objectives as well as steps for achieving them is at the heart of a successful interagency linkage team. Time spent on developing an effective plan will pay dividends later because it will provide a framework for guiding the efforts of the team. Developing a plan involves creating an effective planning environment, formulating the plan, and developing administrative support for the plan.

Creating an Effective Planning Environment

The communication and problem-solving process used to establish goals and objectives, agree on roles, make decisions, and resolve conflicts is a crucial variable in creating and sustaining interagency linkages (Melaville and Blank 1991). An effective planning environment is one in which team members can communicate honestly and freely and in which they are free from the distractions of their daily routines. The following elements will contribute to a planning environment that will result in a collaborative plan:

- **Time**. Sufficient, uninterrupted time must be devoted to the task of developing a plan. A minimum of 8 hours is recommended. However, if team members do not know one another and are unfamiliar with the respective organizations represented on the team, a longer period will be required. You may wish to have some shorter preplanning meetings that enable participants to become personally and professionally acquainted.
- **Location**. A neutral location in which participants are freed from the distractions of other responsibilities is best. Team members can be encouraged to dress casually.
- **Appropriate Planning Tools**. There should be a conference table large enough to accommodate the entire team as well as a flip chart for use in recording information. A laptop computer for recording decisions and drafting the plan is also a useful device for this process.
- **Team member commitment to planning time**. Team members should be willing to free their calendars to devote a block of time to developing the plan. This commitment is an indication of their seriousness about participating in a collaborative venture.
- **Facilitation**. Having the services of an outside facilitator who will assist with the process can be helpful. A facilitator can help resolve differences and keep the plan development process on course.
- **Information**. Plan development may require information that team members, individually or collectively, do not possess. If you can anticipate the type of problems or issues the team may choose to address, appropriate resources can be made available during the planning session.

Formulating an Action Plan

A plan for the team's work should contain the following elements: purpose, goals and objectives, specific activities to achieve the goals and objectives, designated responsibilities (who will do what), and timelines for completion of activities. The key problems and issues identified in Step One may provide a foundation for the team's purpose. It is important that those involved reach consensus on the plan's content. Otherwise it may not receive full support from all team members (and hence all agencies represented).

Appendix A contains an action plan form that has been used in the Ohio At-Risk Linkage

Team project. You can copy this form for your team's use in developing its action plan.

Exhibit 1 depicts some examples of objectives and activities from the action plans of local interagency linkage teams in Ohio.

EXHIBIT 1

Sample Objectives and Activities from Ohio Action Plans

Objective: To develop an agency-wide referral system to eliminate frustration and confusion on the part of clients

Procedure/Activity

- Schedule meetings with cooperating agencies
- Educate county agencies on programs
- Name the five common points of criteria for the referral form
- Incorporate in referral form means of agencies' access
- Evaluate through client regarding referral form used
- Contact other areas that have active linkages in place

Objective: Explore possibility of a central assessment center

Procedure/Activity

- Establish a task force to explore assessment resources
- Identify current assessment resources
- Evaluate for feasibility and future action

Objective: Develop a Job Club program to meet the collective needs of all agencies

Procedure/Activity

- Define "Job Club"
- Share information among group; discuss input, mechanics involved
- Identify and establish outcomes, performance, mandate as it affects each group

Developing Agency and Community Support for the Plan

Once the plan is developed and finalized, it needs to be shared with the respective agencies involved in the team. Each team can decide how this activity should be accomplished but team members should be prepared to point out how the plan will help their agency achieve its mission more efficiently and effectively.

Some of the local interagency linkage teams in Ohio have found it beneficial to share their plans with the wider community. One team, for example, created a broad-based community advisory committee that meets quarterly to advise the team on its plans. Broad-based community support may provide access to additional resources, but, equally important, it can generate community good will and support for the team's work.

Questions to Consider in Step Five: Developing a Plan

1. Who will take the responsibility for organizing and implementing a session to develop a team plan?
2. What locations would provide the appropriate setting for the planning session?
3. Who could serve as a facilitator?
4. What information should be available during the planning session?
5. Would it be advantageous to have some team meetings prior to the planning session?
6. If you decide not to use the action plan reprinted in this guide, what type of planning form will you use during the session?
7. What will be done to ensure that the plan is realistic, i.e., that it establishes goals and objectives that can be accomplished?
8. Who will take responsibility for finalizing the plan?
9. How will support for the plan be developed among the agencies represented on the team?
10. How will support for the plan be developed within the community?

STEP SIX
FOLLOW UP AND FOLLOW THROUGH

Achieving interagency consensus on a written action plan is quite an accomplishment. Now, the team is faced with the task of implementing the plan as well as maintaining the momentum that was undoubtedly generated during the planning stage. Sharing your plan with all the agencies represented on the team and the community is a start on this step. There are a number of other actions you can undertake as well to carry the plan forward.

Implementing the Plan

The plan itself should contain the kind of detail that will provide a timeline and assign responsibilities for implementation steps. You can do the following to ensure the plan is accomplished.

- **Hold regular meetings**. Regular contact among the team will sustain the feeling of common mission created during the planning phase. In addition, regular meetings promote collaboration and communication. Meetings should be carefully planned with a meaningful agenda and they should begin and end on time.
- **Request progress reports**. Progress reports should be a part of every meeting. Team members should feel that the work of the team is moving forward; in addition, having to report on their assigned responsibilities from the action plan will give them a sense of accountability for the team's work.
- **Use task forces or committees**. The team's work can often be accomplished more efficiently through task forces or committees. By including individuals who are not team members in these groups, you can garner additional support for the team as well as relieve team members of total responsibility for accomplishing the team's work.
- **Use timelines as a guide**. The timelines established in the action plan should be taken seriously and used to guide the work of the team. They should, however, be evaluated periodically to see if they are realistic or if they need revision.
- **Create an advisory committee**. An advisory committee composed of community representatives can be an asset in accomplishing the team's objectives. In addition to providing access to additional resources, advisory committee members can provide insight into aspects of the work of the team.

Maintaining Momentum

Even though members may have a shared vision for their work as a team, they may have trouble maintaining the initial energy that mobilized the team. Some strategies for sustaining the team's momentum include the following:

- **Rotate leadership role**. Leadership is an important element of collaborative, interagency efforts. Sharing the responsibility for the leadership role may help sustain the vision for the work of the team. Teams may agree to rotate the leadership role on a regular basis as a means of infusing the team with new energy.
- **Share success stories**. It is important for the team to feel a sense of accomplishment. Sharing successful outcomes that are a result of the team's efforts can help members feel they are involved in something worthwhile. Devote a portion of each team meeting to this activity.
- **Regular update of action plan**. The action plan should be updated yearly, if

possible in a retreat setting. Strive for the same type of planning environment as was used to create the initial plan. This planning time will allow team members to focus on their role as a team member and evaluate their work during the past year.

- **Expand or change the membership of the team**. Expanding or changing the team membership will bring the same kind of infusion of new ideas to the team as leadership changes. Some members may need a break from their team responsibilities. Also, members representing additional agencies may be added as a natural outgrowth of the team's expanding work.

Some common pitfalls to avoid include the following (Guthrie and Guthrie 1991):

- **NATO or No action, talk only**. Use the plan to keep meetings on track, ensuring that the work of the team stays on target.
- **Equating information with knowledge**. Although it is important to have information about the respective agencies and about common problems and issues, this information must be absorbed before taking action. Time for reflection is an important aspect of the team's work.
- **Using excessive jargon**. In the spirit of collaboration, speak in terms that all partners can understand. Avoid using alphabet soup acronyms that have meaning only internally.

If your team is successful in its efforts to provide improved services to at-risk youth and adults, it will be much easier to maintain its momentum. Sometimes, despite the best leadership efforts, local conditions simply do not support interagency collaboration. If this is the case in your community, you may need to wait for a more opportune climate but you can use the time to develop networks that will foster future linkages.

Questions to Consider in Step Six: Follow Up and Follow Through

1. Who will take responsibility for the plan's implementation?
2. What can be done to ensure that the team's objectives are accomplished?
3. Should working committees or task forces be established to help in accomplishing the team's plan?
4. Could an advisory committee be an asset to the team in its work?
5. What procedures should the team put in place to ensure continuity of leadership for itself?
6. What procedures should be established to add new members to the team?
7. What steps can the team take to maintain its energy?

CONCLUSION

Interagency linkages take time and effort to develop and foster. In addition, successful linkages require commitment on the part of those organizations involved to devote resources to the effort. According to Bruner (1991, p. 15), "freeing good staff people to work on collaborative initiatives is not a costless action. Effective collaboration often requires tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of dollars in collective staff time." Authentic collaborative efforts evolve over time, frequently after a period in which those involved get to know one another and develop the level of trust needed to engage in joint planning.

A study (Imel and Sandoval 1990) of exemplary linkages in Ohio listed the following suggestions for developing successful linkages:

- Focus on the needs of the client in building linkages. Such an emphasis stresses cooperation, makes good use of existing resources, and helps eliminate "turfism" and duplication of services. It may also require changes in procedures.
- Have regular meetings to share information and keep the lines of communication open.
- Get to know the other agencies involved. You may need to get out of your office and go to meet people and share information. Such knowledge provides understanding that the organizations involved operate differently and that the groups need to learn about each other.
- Remember that linkage development takes time, patience, and persistence as well as the active involvement of the person(s) responsible.
- Establish common goals and purposes, set target dates and make assignments, and establish subcommittees to do work.
- Once the team is in place, take the bold approach and invite all concerned parties to get involved in seeking solutions to barriers. This might include going right to the top, rather than through the chain-of-command in order to establish linkages.
- Begin your linkages with those agencies dealing with employment and training before branching out. Such a tactic prevents spreading your efforts too thin.
- Exchange visits with other agencies to allow staff to become acquainted and to get ideas.
- Become familiar with relevant legislation.

Successful interagency linkages and collaboration can result in many potential benefits:

- Improved identification of at-risk youth and adults
- Improved client access to appropriate secondary and adult education programs
- More informed referrals between schools and county departments of human services
- Coordination of limited resources for maximizing delivery of educational and support services
- Improved working relationships
- Increased knowledge and understanding of the goals, structure, and functioning of the respective agencies
- More realistic expectations when working together

Clearly, developing and fostering interagency linkage teams at the local level is not for the faint hearted. Vision, persistence, and a desire to improve client services are essential ingredients. Collaboration can happen, but someone must take the initiative.

REFERENCES

Bruner, C. ***Thinking Collaboratively: Ten Questions and Answers to Help Policy Makers Improve Children's Services***. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium, Institute for Educational Leadership, 1991. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 338 984)

Guthrie, G. P., and Guthrie, L. F. "Streamlining Interagency Collaboration for Youth at Risk." ***Educational Leadership*** 49, no. 1 (September 1991): 17-22.

Imel, S., and Sandoval, G. T. ***Ohio At-Risk Linkage Team Project: A Report on Three State Team Projects***. Columbus: Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, September 1990. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 324 514)

Melaville, A. I., with M. J. Blank. ***What It Takes: Structuring Interagency Partnerships to Connect Children and Families with Comprehensive Services***. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium, Institute for Educational Leadership, 1991. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 330 748)

APPENDIX A

ACTION PLAN FORM

This form can be copied for use in completing **Step Five: Developing a Plan.**

AT-RISK LINKAGE TEAM ACTION PLAN

Team Name _____

Member Information

Complete for each team member:

Team Member #1 (Chair/Contact Person)

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #2

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #3

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #4

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #5

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #6

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #7

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #8

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

Team Member #9

Name_____

Position_____

Agency_____

Address_____

_____County_____

Telephone _____/_____

ACTION PLAN

I. List the priority needs of your area

II. Sources of needs assessment information

III. Define target audience

IV. Purpose/Goal

V. Objectives

1.0

2.0

3.0

4.0

5.0

VI. Implementation plan

Objective 1.0: _____

	Procedure/Activity	Persons(s) Responsible	Anticipated Completion Date
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			
1.5			
1.6			
1.7			
1.8			
1.9			
1.10			
1.11			
1.12			

Objective 2.0: _____

	Procedure/Activity	Persons(s) Responsible	Anticipated Completion Date
2.1			
2.2			
2.3			
2.4			
2.5			
2.6			
2.7			
2.8			
2.9			
2.10			
2.11			
2.12			

Objective 3.0: _____

	Procedure/Activity	Persons(s) Responsible	Anticipated Completion Date
3.1			
3.2			
3.3			
3.4			
3.5			
3.6			
3.7			
3.8			
3.9			
3.10			
3.11			
3.12			

Objective 4.0: _____

	Procedure/Activity	Persons(s) Responsible	Anticipated Completion Date
4.1			
4.2			
4.3			
4.4			
4.5			
4.6			
4.7			
4.8			
4.9			
4.10			
4.11			
4.12			

Objective 5.0: _____

	Procedure/Activity	Persons(s) Responsible	Anticipated Completion Date
5.1			
5.2			
5.3			
5.4			
5.5			
5.6			
5.7			
5.8			
5.9			
5.10			
5.11			
5.12			

VII. Evaluation Criteria

VIII. Products

IX. Dissemination Plan

TEAM SIGNATURES:

#1 _____ signature _____ date

#2 _____ signature _____ date

#3 _____ signature _____ date

#4 _____ signature _____ date

#5 _____ signature _____ date

#6 _____ signature _____ date

#7 _____ signature _____ date

#8 _____ signature _____ date

#9 _____ signature _____ date

APPENDIX B

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Resources that can be consulted for further information are listed here. The list includes both human and print resources as well as resource organizations.

Ohio Resources

State At-Risk Linkage Team

The following members of the State At-Risk Linkage Team can be contacted for information and assistance on developing local interagency linkage teams.

Team Facilitator

Jeffrey Gove
ABLE/JOBS Supervisor
Ohio Department of Education
933 High Street, Suite 210
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 466-5015; Fax (614) 752-1640
ve_gove@ode.ohio.gov

Team Members

Connie Ackerman
Even Start State Coordinator
Federal Assistance, ODE
933 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 752-1571; Fax (614) 752-1622
fa_ackerman@ode.ohio.gov

Mike Behr
Adult Vocational Supervisor
Queen City Vocational Center
425 Ezzard Charles Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45203
(513) 977-8071; Fax (513) 977-8090
oecn_cinc_mb@swoca.ohio.gov

Emma Lee Brewer
Administrative Assistant
JTPA/OBES
145 South Front Street, 5th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-3817; Fax (614) 752-6582
elbrewer@a1@obes01

Carol Brigham
Employment Services/OBES
145 South Front Street, 6th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-0703; Fax (614) 752-9236
cmbrigham@a1@obes01

Paul C. Brown
Manager, Tecumseh Consortium
571 Ledbetter Road
Xenia, OH 45385
(513) 372-3381; Fax (513) 372-7640
dod_kclmi@a1@obes01

Kristen Cox
Assistant Director
Job Training Partnership Service, ODE
65 South Front Street, Room 915
Columbus, OH 43215-4183
(614) 466-3900; Fax (614) 728-6176
ve_cox@ode.ohio.gov

Clifford Eckstrand
Field Representative
Office of Housing and Community Partnerships
Community Development Division
Ohio Department of Development
77 South High Street, P.O. Box 1001
Columbus, OH 43216-1001
(614) 466-2285; Fax (614) 752-4575

David C. Fischer
State GED Administrator
Educational Services, State GED Office
65 South Front Street, Room 210
Columbus, OH 43215-4183
(614) 466-9217; Fax (614) 752-3956
ae_fischer@ode.ohio.gov

Robert Haas
Supervisor
Bureau of Welfare Reform and JOBS
Ohio Department of Human Services
30 East Broad Street, 27th Floor
Columbus, OH 43266-0423
(614) 466-8530; Fax (614) 644-9974

Susan Imel
Senior Research Specialist
Center on Education and Training for Employment
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090
(614) 292-4353 or (800) 848-4815
Fax (614) 292-1260; imel.1@osu.edu

Evelyne James, JOBS Liaison
Bureau of JOBS, Work and Training Section
Ohio Department of Human Services
30 East Broad Street, 27th Floor
Columbus, OH 43266-0423
(614) 466-8530; Fax (614) 644-9974

Karen Jesko
Job Training Partnership Service, ODE
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ve_kjesko@ode.ohio.gov

Robert P. Johnson
Administrator
Ohio Board of Regents
30 East Broad Street, 36th Floor
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(614) 644-1411; Fax (614) 466-5866
csaunders@summit.bor.ohio.gov

Kathryn J. Kildow
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Barbara Nicol
Consultant
Business, Industry, and Labor Alliance
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(614) 466-7144; Fax (614) 728-6176
ve_spaulding@ode.ohio.gov

Jean Stephens
Director, Ohio Literacy Resource Center
Kent State University, 414 White Hall
P.O. Box 5190
Kent, OH 44242-0001
(800) 765-2897; Fax (216) 672-4841
jstephen@kentvm.kent.edu

Whitaker W. Wright
Coordinator, Welfare Reform
Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS)
Two Nationwide Plaza
280 North High Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-2537
(614) 466-9021; Fax (614) 752-8645

Print Resources

The print resources in the following annotated bibliography can be consulted for further information.

Principles of Collaboration

Bruner, C. ***Thinking Collaboratively: Questions and Answers to Help Policy Makers Improve Services for Children***. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium, Institute for Educational Leadership, 1991. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 338 984)

Using a question and answer format, this publication helps state and local policy makers consider how best to foster local collaboration that truly benefits children and families. Checklists are provided to help policy makers quickly assess key issues in establishing interagency initiatives, demonstration projects, and statewide reforms to foster collaboration. (Available for $3.00 from the Education and Human Services

Consortium, c/o IEL, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310, Washington, DC 20036-5541. Tel.: (202) 822-8405.)

Greenberg, M., and Levy, J. ***Confidentiality and Collaboration: Information Sharing in Interagency Efforts***. Washington, DC: A joint publication of Joining Forces, American Public Welfare Association, Center for Law and Social Policy, Council of Chief State School Officers, and Education Commission of the States, 1992. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 345 402)

Based on the premise that confidentiality is neither an impenetrable barrier nor something that can be casually disregarded, this publication shares the experiences of practitioners from around the country who are tackling the issue successfully. Includes information about how the principle of "informed consent" is being approached by states and localities. Includes sample forms. (Available as No. AR-9201 for $6.00 from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 707 17th Street, Suite 2700, Denver, CO 80202-3427.)

Guthrie, P. G., and Guthrie, L. F. "Streamlining Interagency Collaboration for Youth at Risk." ***Educational Leadership*** 49, no. 1 (September 1991): 17-22.

A summary of emerging principles for interagency collaboration including examples of how some communities are trying to encourage interagency collaboration.

Kadel, S. ***Interagency Collaboration: Improving the Delivery of Services to Children and Families***. Tallahassee, FL: Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE), July 1992. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 349 511)

This four-part report focuses on interagency collaboration in the delivery of social services to children and families. Covered are the "what" and "why" of collaboration; steps, advice, and strategies for collaborating; information on state- and national-level collaborative action; and possible sources of financial support. Appendices offer information on publications and tools to aid a collaborative effort through each state of development (e.g., needs assessment surveys, staff oath of confidentiality, and so forth). (Single copies available free from SERVE by calling (800) 352-6001; additional copies, $7.00.)

Mattessich, P. W., and Monsey, B. R. ***Collaboration: What Makes It Work***. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1992.

Subtitled, "A Review of Research Literature on Factors Influencing Successful Collaboration," this publication reviews and summarizes the existing research literature on factors that influence the success of collaboration. The results are reported in a manner that enables users of the report to benefit from the experiences of others. (Available for $11.95 plus $2.00 shipping and handling from Amherst H. Wilder Foundation Publishing Center, 919 Lafond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104; (800) 274-6024.)

Melaville, A., with M. Blank. ***What It Takes: Structuring Interagency Partnerships to Connect Children and Families with Comprehensive Services***. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium, Institute for Educational Leadership, 1991. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 330 748)

This monograph looks at why local schools, health and welfare agencies, youth service agencies, community-based organizations, and others must join forces on behalf of children and families, and it offers guidance based on emerging experience about how they can move forward together. (Available for $3.00 from the Education and Human Services Consortium, c/o IEL, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310, Washington, DC 20036-5541. Tel.: (202) 822-8405.)

Melaville, A. I., and Blank, M. J. ***Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services***. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education; and Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, April 1993. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 357 856)

Developed to help communities improve coordination of education, health, and human services for at-risk children and families, this publication leads the reader through a five-stage collaborative process with milestones

and landmines portrayed through vignettes and case studies. The concept of systems change is basic to the guide. Especially useful are the appendices that include checklists and a directory of key contacts and resource organizations and an extensive bibliography of resources. (Available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop: SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328; ISBN 0-16-041721-X.)

National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations. ***The Community Collaboration Manual***. Washington, DC: NANVHSWO, 1991.

Designed to be used by individuals at any level within any type of community organization, this manual explores options for building and sustaining collaborations by providing step-by-step guidelines for the initial formation of a collaboration. For those beginning collaborative activities, information on basic steps is included, but for those more experienced, it includes a discussion of more complex issues. Topics of special interest are business involvement in collaboration, the role of the media, and pitfalls and barriers to successful collaboration. (Available for $10.95 plus $3.00 shipping from NANVHSWO, 1319 F Street, NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20004; (202) 347-2080; Fax (202) 393-4517.)

Ohio Center for Action on Coalition Development for Families and High Risk Youth. ***Building Coalitions***. Columbus: Cooperative Extension Service, The Ohio State University, 1992. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 350 407)

The Ohio Center for Action on Coalition Development has produced a series called, "Building Coalitions," that consists of a number of fact sheets on the following topics: needs assessment for coalition building, understanding the process, goal setting, communication, working with diverse cultures, turf issues, and evaluation. In addition, the center makes available a reference manual that includes a teaching plan for using the fact sheets. (For further information, contact the Ohio Center for Action on Coalition Development, The Ohio State University, Room 203, Agricultural Administration, 2120 Fyffe Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1084; (614) 292-2533.)

Winer, M., and Ray, K. ***Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, and Enjoying the Journey***. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1994.

This four-part guide is designed to help users learn about creating, sustaining, and enjoying new ways of working together. Part I offers a story to present in action the stages and challenges of collaboration. In part II, collaboration is defined and the metaphor of a journey is applied to the process of collaboration. The four stages of collaboration are detailed in part III. The appendices in part IV contain resources and forms for documenting collaboration. (Available for $28.00 plus $2.00 shipping and handling from Amherst H. Wilder Foundation Publishing Center, 919 Lafond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104; (800) 274-6024.)

Wynn, J. R.; Merry, S. M.; and Berg, P. G. ***Children, Families, and Communities: Early Lessons from a New Approach to Social Services***. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium, American Youth Policy Forum of the Institute for Educational Leadership, 1995.

This paper presents observations and early lessons from a community initiative now in its fourth year in eight Chicago-area communities. The initiative is based on a conceptual framework designed to redefine services and broaden social responsibility for the development of children and families. (Available for $5.00 from American Youth Policy Forum, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 719, Washington, DC 20036-5541; (202) 775-9731.)

Welfare Reform

Imel, S. ***Welfare to Work: The Role of Adult Basic and Literacy Education. Practice Application Brief***. Columbus: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, 1995. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 381 689)

This brief reviews the research findings on welfare reform and adult basic and literacy education and lists implications for practice. (Available free from ERIC/ACVE, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090.)

Reder, S., and Wikelund, K. R. ***Steps to Success: Literacy Development in a Welfare-to-Work Program. Final Report to the National Institute for Literacy***. Portland, OR: Literacy, Language & Communication Program, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, November 1994. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 381 631)

Reports on the results of a project that investigated long-term literacy development and its economic impact among clients of a welfare-to-work program. Results indicate that clients in the educational track of the welfare-to-work program raised their literacy skills substantially.

Schorr, L. B. ***Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage***. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

Based on her belief that "we can significantly change the odds for youngsters growing up in environments that threaten healthy development by building on programs that have already proven successful," the author describes programs that worked for families and children living in poverty and social dislocation.

Southport Institute for Policy Analysis. ***"It's Not Like They Say." Welfare Recipients Talk about Welfare, Work and Education***. Washington, DC: SIPA, 1992.

Extracts from interviews with 22 groups of approximately 150 welfare recipients in five different states in which the participants speak for themselves about the AFDC program, work, education, family and all other topics that make up the standard discussion on welfare provide the text for this report.

Wikelund, K. R. ***Motivations for Learning: Voices of Women Welfare Reform Participants. NCAL Technical Report TR93-10***. Philadelphia: National Center on Adult Literacy, University of Pennsylvania, October 1993. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 364 748)

Reports on the results of a qualitative study in which 27 clients in the welfare-to-work literacy program participated. As a result of the program, participants experienced participants experienced positive changes in their concepts of self, skills,and sense of choice and personal control regarding progress toward self-sufficiency.

Common Good Project Publications

Imel, S. ***For the Common Good: Local Interagency Linkage Team. Second Follow-up Report***. Columbus: Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, September 1994. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 374 324)

This follow-up report assesses the results of the Common Good, a statewide project to facilitate the formation of local interagency linkage teams throughout Ohio. Included is information received from 31 of the 36 teams about their activities as well as other information collected during the 4-year project. Concludes with recommendations about local interagency linkage teams and their activities.

Imel, S. ***Local Interagency Linkage Team Follow-Up Report. Ohio At-Risk Linkage Team Project***. Columbus: Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, August 1992. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 347 406)

Reports on the efforts of the first 2 years of the Ohio At-Risk Linkage Team Project (now known as the Common Good) to strengthening state and local linkages of programs and services offered to at-risk persons. Includes information collected from 23 local linkage teams about their efforts to create integrated services.

Imel, S., and Sandoval, G. T. ***Ohio At-Risk Linkage Team Project: A Report on Three State Team Projects***. Columbus: Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, 1990. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 324 514)

Reports on the experiences of the State of Ohio At-Risk Linkage team including an analysis of a statewide linkage survey, implementation of a linkage workshop for local teams, and identification of exemplary local linkages. Contains copies of completed action plans and tips about developing and maintaining local interagency linkages.

National Resource Organizations

There are a number of national organizations that are involved in improving services for at-risk youth and adults including the following. For a complete list, consult ***Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services*** (Melaville and Blank 1993).

Education and Human Services Consortium

Martin J. Blank, Facilitator
c/o Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-8405; Fax: (202) 872-4050

The Education and Human Services Consortium is a loosely-knit coalition of national organizations concerned with community and agency efforts to rebuild a system of comprehensive services and supports for children, youth and their families. Affiliated with the American Youth Policy Forum, the consortium has published a number of excellent publications on collaboration.

Family Resource Coalition (FRC)

Judy Langford Carter, Executive Director
200 South Michigan Avenue, 16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 341-0900; Fax: (312) 341-9361

FRC is a membership organization whose immediate goal is to improve the content and expand the number of programs available to parents for strengthening families. The coalition serves programs, parents, researchers, and policy makers by providing information and technical assistance related to prevention program models, strategies, and research.

National Center for Service Integration (NCSI)

c/o Child and Family Policy Center
218 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1021
Des Moines, IA 50309-40016
(515) 280-9027; Fax: (515) 244-8997

NCSI brings together leaders service integration planners, practitioners, administrators, and experts to exchange ideas and information and to develop written resource materials for communities and practitioners.

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW)

Cynthia Marano, Executive Director
815 15th Street, NW, Suite 916
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 638-3143

WOW is a national women's employment organization that works to achieve equality of opportunity and economic independence for women. WOW coordinates the Women's Work Force Network, connecting 450 local employment and training programs and serving 300,000 women each year. WOW's resources include program models and technical assistance guides related to combining literacy and employment training for single mothers.

APPENDIX C

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OHIO?

Prior to the passage of the Family Support Act (FSA), Ohio had already implemented welfare reform activities in 42 of its 88 counties through the Ohio Fair Work program. Since 1987, an informal network had gradually been established between educators and human services staff at the state level. Implementation of the FSA provided the opportunity to forge stronger connections between educational and support services and to expand the range and capacity of programs for learners at risk.

In the summer of 1989, Ohio formed a team at the state level to facilitate development of linkages between educators and human services staff. Originally composed of representatives from the Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the Ohio Common Good State Linkage Team has been expanded to include representation from the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) Job Training Partnership Act Division and Employment Services Division; the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD); the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS); the Ohio Literacy Resource Center (OLRC); the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR); and two local linkage teams. The primary focus of the state team is to strengthen both the state and local linkages of programs and services designed to serve Ohio's at-risk families, including FSA program participants.

Recognizing the critical influence of family on the education and work life of all family members, the state team emphasizes a holistic approach to help JOBS and other at-risk customers become self-sufficient and build strong families. The state team is a synergistic forum where state agencies and local providers collaborate to integrate, innovate, change, and develop priorities for services and activities. The team's collaborative focus is on both state and local coordination and development of compatible policies, programs, and resources for education, training, and employment. Collaborative activities result in the elimination of duplicative programs and services and the development of high-quality, cost-effective customer services.

The statewide project, "For the Common Good: Building Linkages for At-Risk Families in Ohio," emerged from the efforts of the state team to strengthen local interagency linkages throughout Ohio. Since 1990, 41 local linkage teams have been formed under the state team's auspices. These local teams focus on improving services to at-risk youth and adults, including FSA program participants, through the development of collaborative interagency linkages. To encourage and facilitate local linkages of programs and services offered to FSA participants, the state team planned and implemented four workshops to train local interagency linkage teams.

Local linkage teams from throughout Ohio were trained during these 2-day workshops held in April 1990, October 1991, October 1993, and May 1995. The workshops were designed to provide sufficient planning time for teams to draft an action plan for guiding their activities during the following 12 months. Technical assistance in the form of round tables and state-level staff expertise was available to teams. Teams attending the workshops were required to have members representing the following areas: adult basic and literacy education, vocational education, Job Training Partnership Act, human services, and employment services. For the 1993 and

1995 workshops, teams were also strongly encouraged to have representatives from their local ODADAS boards and community action agencies. Beyond these requirements, each team filled its roster according to local community needs and preexisting linkages. Some teams included representation from such groups as the Urban League, postsecondary education, local literacy councils, and family development centers.

To sustain and encourage the local linkage teams formed under its leadership, the state team also planned and implemented three follow-up meetings for local linkage teams. During these meetings, held in June 1991, May 1993, and April 1994, teams reviewed and revised their action plans, networked with other teams, and shared successes.

Both the initial and follow-up training sessions have been evaluated very positively by participants. However, the success of these programs can be judged only on the basis of subsequent team activities. Did the workshops serve as a catalyst for launching and sustaining interagency teams? Were teams successful in following through on their action plans? Have they improved client services? In other words, were the workshops successful in stimulating interagency linkage teams that worked?

By far the most complete picture of team activities and accomplishments has been obtained from two local linkage team follow-up surveys, the first in 1992 and the second in 1994. In 1994, teams listed 74 items in response to the question, "What have been your team's major accomplishments?" The largest number (22%) of these related to improved communication among and between agencies represented on the team, followed closely by enhancing services to clients (20%) and improving and developing client programs and services (15%). According to 62 percent of the 1994 respondents, these accomplishments would not have been possible without the linkage team, with an additional 19 percent giving at least partial credit to the team. Some typical comments about the role of the linkage team in the reported accomplishments include the following:

- *All of these things happened because of the linkage team. We have a more positive outlook because we understand more about the other agencies and programs that are involved.*

- *It takes time to learn to trust and spending meeting and planning time together can lead to a trusting partnership. It sure has.*

- *The accomplishments are a group effort. No one person or agency could implement such things as a universal release of information.*

Success of the local linkage teams has also been documented through the participation of teams in receiving funding to support their linkage activities. In Spring 1994, local linkage teams that had been formed through the project were given the opportunity to apply for JTPA state Education and Coordination Grant funds (8%). Through this grant, a total of $300,000 was made available with a maximum individual grant amount of $30,000. Twenty-two teams submitted proposals in response to a request for proposals sent to the 36 teams considered to be "active." Of these, 10 teams each received $30,000 grants for projects that enhanced their interagency coordination. The intent of the grants was to encourage system building, integrated planning, and promotion of systems change. Six of the 10 projects focused on establishing computer communication systems for service providers as a means of enhancing client services.

More recently—August 1995—OBES announced the first awards for Ohio Customer Service Centers. Four of the seven awards were made to areas with active Common Good teams, all of which participated in the development of the proposal.

In November 1995, the Common Good project will celebrate its fifth anniversary with a 2-day follow-up meeting to which all teams formed during the project are invited. The fact that Nancy Hollister, Ohio's Lieutenant Governor, has agreed to keynote this event is affirmation of the accomplishments of the project. However, the concrete documentation of the project's success can be seen in the many achievements of the local linkage teams located throughout Ohio. The process described in this guide is based on the experiences of the local linkage teams in Ohio as well as more general resources.